

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

With this resolution, Congress puts the Bush administration on notice we take the first step toward a course correction in Iraq that the American people voted last November.

We also put the leaders of Iraq on notice that our troop strength there will be redeploying, not escalating.

This House cannot stand by and expect our courageous troops to win the war against terrorism militarily while the Commander in Chief loses it strategically and ideologically.

Some have said passage will make bin Laden smile. They are mistaken. He is already smiling due to the devolving chaos in Iraq. He is achieving exactly what he set out to do: forcing us to destroy a nation to save it, while embroiling our military in an unending Islamic civil war of attrition that produces more terrorism and anger toward America.

Our mission in Iraq is struggling, but it is not due to a shortage of supplies or a lack of will or poorly trained forces. To the contrary, we have the best military in the world, with every dollar appropriated by this very House.

Our mission is faltering because the President misjudged the field of battle. Our troops are poised against a borderless political movement determined to mobilize downtrodden people.

That idea emboldens its adherence to confront the largest military force in the world. That idea enlists the weak to confront the powerful. It pits puritanical religious followers against kingdoms, against the superrich, and against corrupt regimes they deem to be unfaithful. And in Iraq it propels Sunni against Shia.

Despite the heroic efforts of our troops, the paradox is that the war in Iraq cannot be won in Iraq. Indeed, the war in Iraq becomes counterproductive in winning the war of ideas across the region.

We cannot ask our troops to bear the burden of winning a ground war when the President's policies have lost the idea war.

We know the truth. There were no chemical labs, as pictured here, when Secretary Powell laid out the case against Iraq before the U.N. and said there were chemical labs in Iraq. There were no such chemical labs. There was no yellow cake uranium from Niger, and there were no weapons of mass destruction.

We cannot ask our troops to win military victory when the administration's reason for invasion were falsehoods and debased our Nation throughout the world.

The intelligence was not faulty. No one should be allowed to blame this on the Central Intelligence Agency. Our intelligence community, including the CIA, tried to tell President Bush and Vice President *Cheney*, but they refused to listen.

Madam Speaker, though I voted for the NATO mission in Afghanistan, I spoke out strongly against the resolution authorizing President Bush to wage preemptive war against Iraq because I feared what would happen:

more terrorism, not less; more instability, not less.

Since that vote I have supported our troops at every turn and will continue to support them. And I do not regret my vote against the war in Iraq, and I do not apologize for my support of our troops. But now is the time to take the first step toward course correction to redeploy them more effectively.

The roots of terrorism did not spring from Iraq. Terrorism sprang from diplomatic and political failures in undemocratic states, from an Afghanistan that was let fester after the Soviet defeat. Terrorism springs from an Iran whose Shia majority our Nation has isolated for the last quarter century and tried to throttle for the prior quarter century.

Terrorism springs from Saudi families who pay to promote the most radical form of Islam in other nations to hold onto power in their homeland, one of the most undemocratic places on Earth. Terrorism springs from the unaddressed Israeli-Palestinian standoff. Terrorism springs from a Lebanon where the Shia majority has been underrepresented in the institutions of government.

Terrorism springs from a view, fair or not, that the United States allies with the rich but not the poor across the undemocratic Islamic world. How can America stand for democracy in Iraq but not in all of the oil kingdoms and theocracies to which this Nation has been unfortunately tethered for our entire adult lifetimes?

How can we ask our troops to bear the brunt of war in the most oil rich region of the world when we have refused to become energy independent here at home?

Madam Speaker, we cannot ask our troops to bear the burden of war when real diplomacy has been absent and political coalitions for victory are missing in action. In the end, war is the breakdown of diplomacy.

Now is the time for a course correction: redeployment of U.S. forces, benchmarks to measure strategic achievements, diplomatic alternatives such as a soft partition of Iraq enforced by the world community to quell the rising Sunni-Shia-Kurd standoff.

Chances are the violence in Iraq could continue for years to come. The danger now is that our actions to date exacerbate it and encourage this violence to spill over into Jordan, Turkey, Bahrain, Kuwait, Lebanon, and even Saudi Arabia.

This resolution begins to resurrect America's reputation among the freedom-loving nations of

world. America has always been a nation that believes in containment, not preemption. We have always known defense, not offense, is the best war strategy. We have always been strong enough to ferret out, wait out, outsmart, and counterweight the enemy.

3,117 U.S. dead; 23,000 injured; hundreds of thousands of Iraqis dead; the rejection of the world community. These facts should lead us to face a future of a new possibility.

This resolution opens that door. I urge my colleagues to vote ``yes."